Information Operations and Winning the Peace: Applying Lessons Learned from the Israeli/Palestinian Conflict

An Information Operations Workshop

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> *"Potential enemy audiences and particularly senior decision-makers should be understood, along with decision-making processes and priorities. If such human factors analysis is not conducted in advance, it is unlikely we can craft...themes and messages that will modify adversary behavior."*
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> *U.S. Department of Defense, Information Operations Roadmap*

The United States Army War College, in collaboration with the Advanced Network Research Group at the Cambridge Security Programme, will conduct a workshop into how Information Operations (IO) influences actors during stabilization and reconstruction in the midst of counterinsurgency operations. It will take place from 29 November to 1 December 2005 at the Center for Strategic Leadership, Carlisle Barracks, PA.

BACKGROUND

While major combat operations remain a possibility in the future, it is the ability to undertake stabilization and reconstruction operations (S&R) post-combat that will also determine whether a stable and peaceful outcome can be achieved. In conflict research, the conceptual focus in the near term is on a coalition's ability to plan, resource, execute and sustain this phase of an operation. The fact that these operations increasingly occur in the midst of a counterinsurgency that blurs traditional military phases, and are made even more tenuous by complex political circumstances, will not surprise anyone with an understanding of the current geo-strategic environment. The uncertainty, complexity and diversity of the situation elevate the significance of Information Operations (IO) as a prime contributing concept to achieving a successful outcome in coalition operations.

OVERALL WORKSHOP OBJECTIVE

The objective of the workshop is to define and analyze how IO influences both adversaries and internal and external actors, in order better to contribute to a positive end state. Participants will use the Israeli/Palestinian case study to drive critical discussions of the interplay between the tactical, strategic and political-military dimensions of IO in a complex conflict/S&R environment.

WORKSHOP DESIGN

The workshop will bring together an international audience of military, national security community and intelligence community leaders as well as experts from academia. It will be conducted over the course of three days. It will begin with a plenary session and a dinner and keynote speech to set the stage for the subsequent working sessions and discussions. In order to satisfy workshop objectives, day two will focus on addressing key themes through a series of interactive workgroups. Day three will be devoted to briefing the plenary group with the recommendations, observations and insights gained from the individual break-out groups.

The workshop will center on how the potential effectiveness of IO impacts on the achievement of the effect sought and the final outcome. The means to communicate has been pushed down and out among all actors to include governments, non-government organizations, individual groups and individuals-where individuals can produce "mass effect" on people, events and perceptions. The workshop will examine how technology changes agents of conflict and their objectives. In other words, it will consider the significance of communication, information and the information environment, and how these affect the players' perspectives, objectives and actions. Consequently, the breakout groups will use the Israeli/Palestinian case study as described in plenary sessions as a vehicle to drive discussion. The groups will examine tactical, operational (campaign) and strategic level vignettes and address pertinent themes outlined in the preceding plenary sessions.

PLENARY SESSION TOPICS

Initial plenary sessions will set the stage for the breakout group sessions. The initial briefing will generally address broad themes that have significant IO implications. These themes will then be illustrated with applicable examples taken from the Israeli/Palestinian Conflict. A historical timeline will bring perspective to the conflict and establish baseline knowledge among participants. Finally, "ground truth" will be presented with a graphical and map display of the unique geography, demographics and communications that impact the case study.

WORKSHOP DELIVERABLES

Two weeks prior to the workshop participants will receive an e-copy of the participant binder containing workshop presentations, reference material, and a roster containing participant contact information. (It is strongly advised that participants familiarize themselves with the briefing materials prior to the workshop).

At the end of the workshop, participants should have developed significantly new insights into the effects of IO. A monograph reviewing the key issues, discussions, findings and recommendations of the workshop will published after the event by the Center for Strategic Leadership and the Cambridge Security Programme.

TENTATIVE PROGRAM

Tuesday, 29 November 2005 – The Collins Center
1300 – 1400   Arrive and Register
1400 – 1700   Plenary Session, Setting the Stage (Normandy Room, 3rd Floor)
1800 – 2100   Cocktails and Dinner w/Keynote Speaker (Letort View Community Center)

Wednesday, 30 November 2005 – The Collins Center
0830 – 0900   Continental Breakfast (2nd Floor)
0900 – 0930   Introduction (Normandy Room, 3rd Floor)
0930 – 1145   Small Group Discussion (Team Rooms. 2nd Floor)
1145 – 1245   Lunch (Ardennes Room)
1245 – 1445   Small Group Discussions (Team Rooms, 2nd Floor)
1500 – 1700   Small Group Discussion (Team Rooms, 2nd Floor)
1700 – 1800   Briefing Development (Team Rooms, 2nd Floor)
Dinner on your own

Thursday, 1 December 2005 – The Collins Center
0800 – 0900   Working Breakfast (Ardennes)
0900 – 1200   Workshop Briefs and Discussion (Normandy Room)
1200   Wrap-up and Adjourn (Normandy Room)

CONTACT INFORMATION

For additional information regarding this event please contact Prof. Dennis Murphy at 717-245-3937 or Mr. Jim White at 717-245-3392. Email: dennis.murphy@us.army.mil or jim.white4@us.army.mil.